

Jamie skipped down the hall and came to a stop at the top of the steps. She felt a fluttery, excited feeling in her stomach. Today was her birthday! Birthdays in Jamie's house were always special. Mom usually cooked a nice breakfast and dinner. Jamie also expected cake, ice cream, and lots of presents after dinner.

Jamie hopped down the steps, ready for her special day to begin. When she got to the kitchen, she sniffed the air. She could not smell any special breakfast cooking. "Where's my special breakfast?" she asked Mom. "Why, honey, this is what we eat every morning. You know that." Jamie's mother continued to pour milk over her cereal. Jamie sat down in her chair and looked at the corn flakes with a pout. Could it be that Mom had forgotten her birthday?

As Jamie was munching on her corn flakes, Dad came into the kitchen and sat down at the table. "Good morning, you two," Dad said. "I'm hungry. What's for breakfast?" "Good," Jamie thought, "maybe he'll remember my birthday breakfast." But Dad just kept munching on his cereal. "Don't forget, I won't be home for dinner," Dad said. "I'm going bowling with some friends tonight." Jamie dropped her spoon and stared at her dad in surprise. Why, Dad was not going to be here for her birthday dinner!

After a kiss from Mom and Dad, Jamie started out the door for school, dragging her bookbag behind her. She felt very sad because Mom and Dad seemed to have forgotten her birthday. As she got closer to school, she felt better because maybe her friends would remember her birthday. However, not one of Jamie's friends mentioned her birthday the whole day.

When Jamie got home from school, Mom greeted her at the door. "We're going to go watch Dad bowl tonight, so we'll eat our dinner out." Jamie was too sad to care. She felt that her birthday would pass and no one would notice. Mom and Jamie drove to the bowling alley in silence. When they walked into the building, Jamie's mother pointed and said, "There's Dad." Jamie looked up and saw Dad smiling and waving near a lane at the end of the alley.

Suddenly Jamie took a closer look. Why, next to Dad stood three of Jamie's friends, smiling and waving! On a table nearby, Jamie saw a small stack of presents and a cake box. "We didn't forget your birthday," Mom said beside her. "We just wanted to surprise you." Jamie gave her Mom a big hug. "Thanks, Mom," she said. All at once, Jamie felt that her birthday would be a good one after all.

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